

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

OCTOBER 2003



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Read this !

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## Falling unemployment rates reflect seasonal changes

Unemployment rates tumbled in the region and the state as seasonal changes in the local job market kicked in. According to estimates released by the Department of Workforce Development the unemployment rate in the West Central region declined from 5.0 percent in August to 4.5 percent in September as unemployment in the state dropped from 5.9 percent to 4.9 percent of the labor force. In the Eau Claire-Chippewa metro area, the unadjusted rate dropped from 4.7 to 4.1 percent in September. One year ago the unemployment rate was 3.9 percent.

Seasonally adjusted the unemployment rate declined from 5.5 to 5.4 percent, reflecting the seasonal nature of the September labor force. Even at 5.4 percent the metro unemployment rate remains lower than the state seasonally adjusted rate of 5.7 percent. The local rate is also lower than in four of the eleven metro areas in Wisconsin, all of them

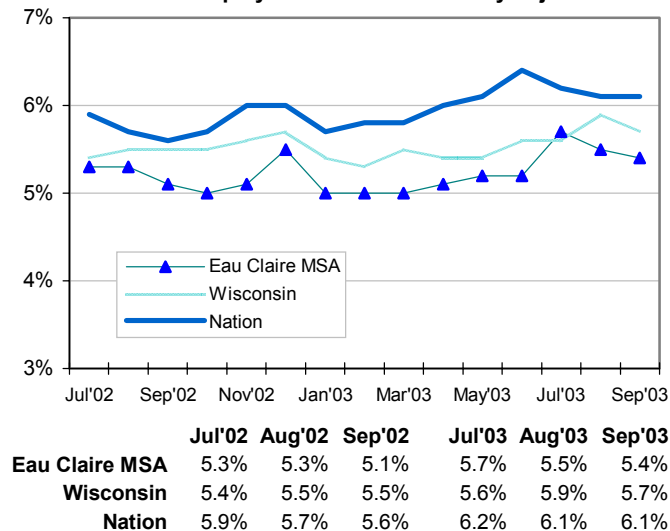
located in the southeast corner of the state.

In spite of job losses in construction, manufacturing, trade, leisure and hospitality, and business services the total number of jobs actually increased in September as state and local government payrolls swelled. A huge up swing in the local economy is the return to work of school employees. While many teachers are on twelve-month contracts other school workers get laid off during the summer and only return to the payroll when classes resume.

The total number of nonfarm jobs in the metro area increased by 600 from August to September but remains 1,000 below the level of one year ago. There were 72,700 jobs in the Eau Claire-Chippewa area in September up from 71,100 in August.

Even though the most significant increase in jobs during the month occurred in government, over 1,300 were added in the metro area, govern-

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



## September Civilian Labor Force Estimates, not seasonally adjusted, for West Central Wisconsin counties

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02
Civilian labor force	25,398	25,606	24,282	31,326	31,336	30,943	15,829	16,118	15,402	22,752	22,286	21,511	54,270	54,472	53,501
Employed	24,152	24,334	23,252	29,908	29,794	29,567	15,057	15,230	14,720	21,949	21,358	20,835	52,175	51,978	51,582
Unemployed	1,246	1,272	1,030	1,418	1,542	1,376	772	888	682	803	928	676	2,095	2,494	1,919
% unemployed	4.9	5.0	4.2	4.5	4.9	4.4	4.9	5.5	4.4	3.5	4.2	3.1	3.9	4.6	3.6
	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02
Civilian labor force	3,456	3,560	3,202	21,161	21,335	20,862	23,907	23,876	23,316	37,465	37,690	36,702	235,564	236,279	229,721
Employed	3,332	3,399	3,087	20,375	20,393	20,001	22,674	22,614	22,220	35,319	35,351	34,671	224,941	224,451	219,935
Unemployed	124	161	115	786	942	861	1,233	1,262	1,096	2,146	2,339	2,031	10,623	11,828	9,786
% unemployed	3.6	4.5	3.6	3.7	4.4	4.1	5.2	5.3	4.7	5.7	6.2	5.5	4.5	5.0	4.3

\* not seasonally adjusted

# Industry Employment Estimate for West Central Wisconsin: Current month - September 2003

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02
Total Nonfarm	22.4	22.4	22.0	10.0	10.0	9.8	15.6	15.1	15.1	2.4	2.4	2.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	6.6	6.7	6.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Trade	3.5	3.6	3.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.6	2.4	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.7	1.6	1.7	0.1	0.0	0.1
Financial Activities	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.9	2.0	2.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.7	1.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.4	1.4	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.6	4.3	4.4	2.0	1.9	2.0	3.6	3.2	3.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02	Sep '03	Aug '03	Sep '02
Total Nonfarm	9.8	9.7	10.5	15.2	15.0	15.2	28.2	28.2	27.6	76.5	75.9	77.5
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	3.1	3.2	3.4
Manufacturing	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	6.0	6.1	6.4	10.2	10.3	11.5
Trade	0.9	0.9	1.2	2.0	2.1	2.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	13.0	13.1	12.6
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.9	1.0	2.7	2.7	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.1	1.1	0.9	3.8	3.8	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	12.4	12.4	12.1
Leisure & Hospitality	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	3.8	3.9	3.3	7.6	7.9	7.5
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	3.7	3.9	3.6	8.0	8.1	8.0
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.8	3.8	3.7
Total Government	2.9	2.8	3.4	2.7	2.4	2.7	3.6	3.1	3.7	11.9	10.6	12.2

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2002 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

ment employment is down from last September. One year ago there were 12,200 jobs with government agencies and institutions while this September there are 11,900 jobs.

Only a few industry sectors reported job gains from last year. There are 400 more jobs with trade employers, 300 more with health and private education, and 100 more with financial institutions and leisure and hospitality industries.

Manufacturing employers reduced payrolls again in September and now are 1,300 jobs short of one year ago. Construction jobs also declined during the month.

This loss of jobs primarily reflects seasonal changes in the local job market and effected all areas in Wisconsin. The rural counties in the West Central region experienced a job loss in construction as well as job reductions in manufacturing, trade, private education and health, leisure and hospitality, and business services. In other words, most industry sectors lost jobs in September while government jobs increased.

The increase of 1,600 jobs in government, primarily with local and state schools, exceeded the reductions from all other industries. There were nearly 700 more jobs in the rural counties in September. The seasonal influx of workers brought unemployment rates down throughout the region. In most counties, however, the

current unemployment rate is the highest for September in since the early 1990s.

In Barron County the unemployment rate dropped from 5.0 percent in August to 4.9 percent in September, higher than the 4.2 percent rate of last September. In Clark, the current unemployment rate of 4.9 percent is lower than the 5.5 percent rate in August but higher than one year ago when the unemployment rate was 4.4 percent. The lowest unemployment rate in the region of 3.5 percent was in Dunn County and is lower than the August rate of 4.2 percent but higher than the 3.1 percent rate of one year ago.

The unemployment rate in Pepin County was 3.6 percent, the same as last September, and is lower than the 4.5 percent rate from August. In Pierce County the rate was 3.7 percent, down from 4.4 percent in August and is one of only 13 counties with a rate lower than one year ago. Last September the unemployment rate in Pierce County was 4.1 percent. In Polk County the current rate of 5.2 percent is lower than the 5.3 percent rate from August and higher than 4.7 percent unemployed last September. The highest rate in the region was in St. Croix County with a 5.7 percent rate in September. Here too, the rate declined during the month from 6.2 percent in August but is higher than the 5.5 percent rate of one year ago.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

Direct questions and comments to: **Beverly Gehrke, Labor Market Analyst**  
 Hayward Job Center, 15618 Windrose Lane, Suite 108, Hayward, Wisconsin 54843  
 715-634-5289 715-634-6094(FAX) e-mail: [Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us)